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ABSTRACT

Questionnaires were sent to 601 zero credit-hour earned nonpersisting students at Moraine Valley Community College (MVCC) who enrolled in spring but did not re-enroll for fall 1976. The survey response rate, which included 85 students contacted by telephone, was 40%. Information on educational goals, withdrawal from classes, hours employed while attending MVCC, financial aid, current and future educational activities, and current employment was collected, and non-persister enrollment patterns were analyzed. Of reasons for withdrawal "present job responsibilities too great" was generally considered the most important; students under 22 years old tended to rate "coursework not challenging" as important; students over 21 tended to rate "family responsibilities interfere with studies" a more important reason. Females indicated finding employment was a major factor in not returning. Primary educational goals were improving or upgrading skills, degrees and certificates, and personal enrichment, in that order. The majority of respondents dropped out of MVCC by mid-term week. More than 30% had been employed while attending MVCC, one-third of these had worked 40 or more hours per week; 19% had received financial aid. Eight percent were currently attending other educational institutions, and 70% were employed. Thirty-six percent had returned to MVCC and were again unsuccessful in earning credits. (TR)

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NONPERSISTER STUDY

ZERO CREDIT HOURS EARNED

SPRING 1976 TO FALL 1976

Office of Research and Evaluation

Moraine Valley Community College

10900 S. 88th Avenue

Palos Hills, Illinois 60465

JUNE 1977

JC 780 326

Preface

This report conducted by the Office of Research and Evaluation is the first report on zero credit hours earned nonpersisters.

Sincere appreciation is expressed to Sharon Teason who typed the report and to Estelle Bakos who prepared the graphics.

Mary Kathryne Baratta
June 1977

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I. Objectives

A list of nonpersisting student names was generated from those students who were enrolled in spring 1976 and did not re-enroll for the fall 1976 semester. Graduates and students enrolled in community service and/or general education courses were excluded from the list of nonpersisters. A survey was designed to determine the characteristics and opinions of these nonpersisting students. This survey was limited to those nonpersisters who did not earn credit in the spring 1976 semester.

The specific objectives which guided the investigation were:

- to determine the characteristics of the zero credit hour earned nonpersisting student.
- to determine the educational goals of the zero credit hour earned nonpersisting student.
- to determine when the zero credit hour earned nonpersisting students' stopped attending classes.
- to determine how many hours a week zero credit hour earned nonpersisting students' worked while attending MVCC.
- to determine the types of financial aid zero credit hour earned nonpersisting students' were receiving.
- to determine nonpersisters' present activities.
- to determine nonpersisters' future activities.
- to determine nonpersisters' reasons for not returning.

II. Procedures

A total of 601 students who either dropped during the spring 1976 semester, or did not return for the fall 1976 semester, were identified as earning zero credit hours. A questionnaire, cover letter and a business reply envelope was mailed to each nonpersister. Except for nonpersisting students who could not be located because of address changes, a second mailing was sent to the nonrespondents. One hundred and sixty of the 601 zero credit hours earned nonpersisters responded (27% response rate).

To establish the reliability of study results and to obtain population data on the zero credit earned nonpersisters a telephone survey was conducted of the nonrespondents. An abbreviated version of the zero credit hour earned nonpersister questionnaire was used to elicit the nonpersisters' responses to: primary reason for enrolling at MVCC and the reason for not re-enrolling at MVCC the following semester. Eighty-five zero credit hour earned nonpersisters or 14% were contacted by telephone. A total of 243 of the 601 zero credit hour earned nonpersisters or 40% supplied MVCC with information.

The distribution of reasons for enrolling and for not re-enrolling of respondents and nonrespondents was similar. The study results can be considered characteristic of all spring 1976-fall 1976 zero credit hour earned nonpersisters.

III. Reasons for Not Returning

A chi-square test was used to study the relation of transfer and occupational programs of study to reasons for withdrawal by zero credit hour earned nonpersisting students. At the .05 level of significance, no differences in reasons for withdrawal were found between transfer and occupational students; therefore, the responses of both groups were combined.

To examine if a relationship exists between full-time and part-time zero credit hour nonpersisting students and reasons for withdrawal, a chi-square test was used. Again, no significant differences at the .05 level of significance were found between full- and part-time students and their reasons for withdrawal; therefore, the responses of these groups were combined.

Table 1 displays the importance attached to various reasons for not returning to MVCC by zero credit hour earned nonpersisters.

In 1976, "Present job responsibilities too great" was the most important reason for not returning as cited by zero credit hour earned nonpersisters. Nine major reasons for not returning were reported in 1976 as opposed to five major reasons in 1975. "Present job responsibilities too great," "Family responsibilities interfere with studies," "Classes not offered at a time convenient for my personal schedule" and "Desired courses not offered," were major reasons for not returning in 1975 and in 1976. However, 1976 nonpersisters added "No clearly defined educational goal," "Dissatisfaction with chosen program," "Health or other personal reasons," "Found employment" and "Inadequate study techniques or habits" as major reasons for not returning.

Chi-square tests were used to examine the relationship between age, sex, high school rank, ACT composite score, high school attended and reasons for withdrawal. Significant differences between the groups were found in only three instances.

Students 21 years of age or younger tended to rate "Coursework not challenging" as an important reason for withdrawal from their MVCC classes. Students 21 years of age or older did not think "Coursework not challenging" was an important reason for withdrawal. Older students, 22 years of age or older, tended to rate "Family responsibilities interfere with studies" as an important reason for withdrawal. Younger students did not rank this aspect as an important reason for withdrawal from MVCC.

Female students tended to rank "Found employment" as an important reason for withdrawal from MVCC classes. Finding employment was not an important reason for not returning to MVCC for male students.

Table 1

Zero Credit Hour Earned Nonpersister Reasons for Not Returning

Reason	1975	1976
Found study too difficult		
Change in career goal		
Transferred to another college	X	
Present job responsibilities too great	X	XX
Applied but could not obtain financial aid		
Lack of transportation		
Family responsibilities interfere with studies	X	X
No clearly defined educational goal		X
Classes not offered at a time convenient for my personal schedule	X	X
Desired courses not offered	X	X
Dissatisfaction with chosen program		X
Poor college social life		
Health or other personal reasons		X
Moved out of MVCC district		
Found employment		X
Coursework not challenging		
Inadequate study techniques or habits		X

Key: XXX = Very Important
XX = Important-Very Important
X = Important
Blank = Not Important

IV. MVCC Activities of Nonpersisters

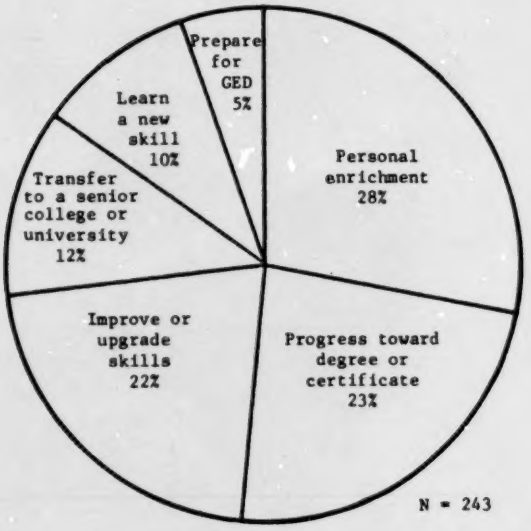
Educational Goals

Zero credit hour earned nonpersisting students were asked to report what their primary educational goals were while attending MVCC; see Figure 1.

Improvement or upgrading of skills (22%), progress toward a degree or certificate (23%) and personal enrichment (28%) were the primary educational goals of zero credit hour earned nonpersisters. This result is similar to the reasons provided for enrolling at MVCC by 1975 nonpersisters.

Figure 1

Zero Credit Hour
Nonpersister Educational Goals


Prepare for GED 5%
Learn a new skill 10%
Transfer to a senior college or university 12%
Personal enrichment 28%
Improve or upgrade skills 22%
Progress toward degree or certificate 23%
N = 243

Withdrawal from Classes

Most zero credit hour earned nonpersisters (46%) reported dropping from their MVCC classes before mid-term; see Figure 2.

A majority of 1976 zero credit hour earned students (52%) had dropped their MVCC courses by the end of mid-term week, this is in contrast to all nonpersisters in 1975 who reported dropping from classes at the end of the semester.

Number of Hours Employed While Attending MVCC

Of the 160 students who responded to the nonpersister questionnaire, 54 or 34% reported that they were employed while attending MVCC; see Figure 3.

Thirty-three percent of the zero credit hour earned nonpersisters were working 40 or more hours a week while attending MVCC. Sixty-one percent were working a minimum of 30 hours a week.

Figure 2

Zero Credit Hour Nonpersister
Time of Withdrawal from Classes

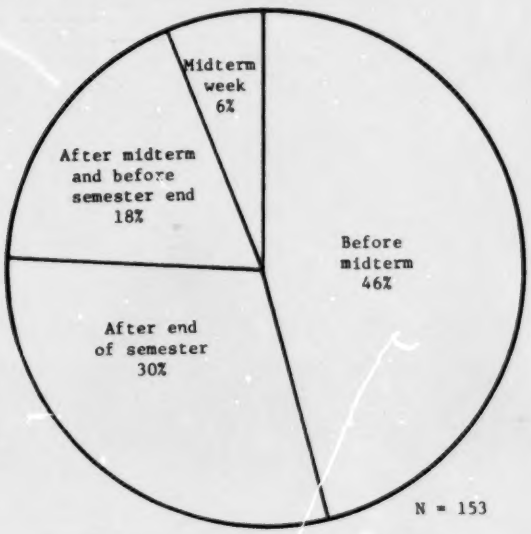
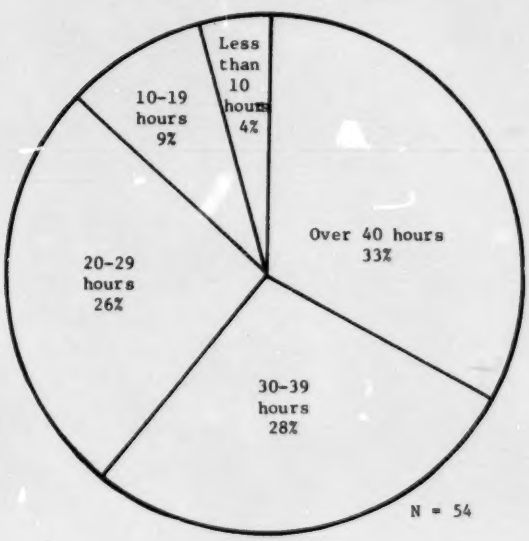


Figure 3

Number of Hours Worked Per Week by
Zero Credit Hour Nonpersisters

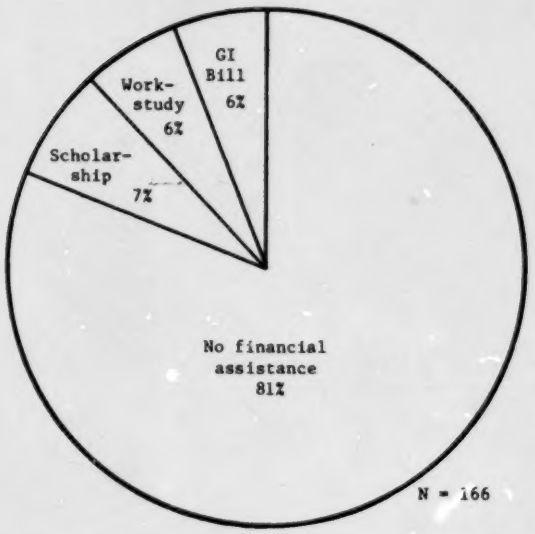


Financial Aid

Eighty-one percent of the students who responded to the survey reported that they received no financial aid. Nineteen percent received financial aid; see Figure 4.

Figure 4

Financial Assistance Received by Zero Credit Hour Nonpersisters



Zero credit hour earned nonpersisters did not make loans in order to attend MVCC.

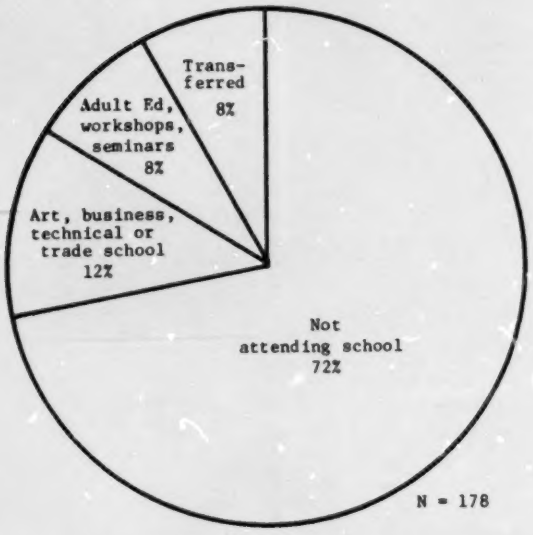
A chi-square test was used to determine if there were any differences in reasons for not returning to MVCC by zero credit hour earned nonpersisters who did and did not receive financial aid. No significant differences in reasons for withdrawal were found between the two groups.

V. Present Activities and Future Plans

Present Educational Activity

Seventy-two percent of the zero credit hour earned nonpersisters are not now attending school; see Figure 5.

Figure 5
Present Educational Activity



Seven of every twenty-five nonpersisters are involved in some type of educational activity. Two of every twenty-five nonpersisters are attending another college.

Present Employment Status

Seventy percent of the nonpersisters are presently employed full-time. Figure 6 displays the present employment status of nonpersisters.

Future Educational Plans

Thirteen percent of the zero credit hour earned nonpersisters do not plan to return to school; see Figure 7.

Twenty-four percent of the nonpersisters plan to complete either a degree or certificate. More than two of every ten students plan to take courses to improve their job skills. More than four of every ten nonpersisters plan to take courses for personal enrichment.

VI. Analysis of Zero Credit Hour Earned Nonpersister Enrollment Patterns

A chi-square test was used to determine whether there was a relationship between the number of credit hour attempted by zero credit hour earned nonpersisters who officially withdrew and whether or not they were previously enrolled at MVCC. At the .05 level of significance,

Figure 6

Present Employment Status of Nonpersisters

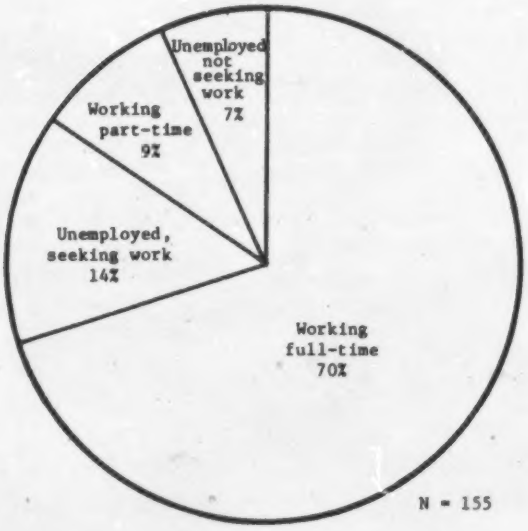
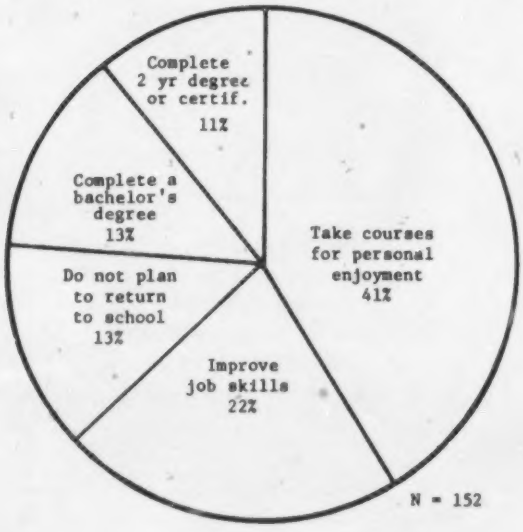


Figure 7

Future Educational Plans


Complete 2 yr degree or certif. 11%
Complete a bachelor's degree 13%
Take courses for personal enjoyment 41%
Do not plan to return to school 13%
Improve job skills 22%
N = 152

a difference was found between the two groups. Full-time zero credit hour earned nonpersisters who officially withdrew tended to return to MVCC at a later date as full-time students. Eighteen percent of the nonpersisters fell into this category. However, in their subsequent re-enrollment at MVCC they were not successful in earning credit. Those nonpersisters who attempted less than 10 credit hours did not tend to return to MVCC.

A chi-square test was used to determine whether there was a relationship between the number of credit hours attempted by students earning all X's and whether or not they were previously enrolled at MVCC. At the .05 level of significance a difference was found between the two groups. Those students who earned all X's and attempted 10 or more credit hours tended to return to MVCC at a later date. Eighteen percent of the non-persisters fell into this category. However, in their subsequent re-enrollment at MVCC they were not successful in earning credit. Those nonpersisters who attempted less than 10 credit hours did not tend to return to MVCC.

An analysis of classes in which the zero credit hour earned students were enrolled was conducted. Classes in which at least 20 zero credit hour earned nonpersisters were enrolled is presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Classes That Enrolled at Least 20 Zero Credit Hour Earned Nonpersisters

Course	Title	No. Enrolled
COM 101	Composition I	76
BUS 142	Introduction to Accounting	70
PSY 101	Introduction to Psychology	68
BUS 100	Introduction to Business	43
BUS 120	Business Math	40
SOC 101	General Sociology	38
HIS 202	American History II	33
DPR 101	Introduction to Data Processing	32
MTH 110	Fundamentals of Math	32
COM 099	Developmental Composition	31
GEI 010	GED Test Review I	31
BUS 101	Typing I	30
COM 111	Technical Composition II	28
HUM 101	Introduction to Humanities I	28
POS 101	Introduction to Law Enforcement	27
CHM 099	Chemistry (Developmental)	26
MTH 099	Developmental Math	26
PSC 101	Political Science	26
BUS 136	Business Law	25
HIS 101	Western Civilization	25
BIO 111	General Biology I	24
MTH 114	Intermediate Algebra	24
ART 101	Freehand Drawing	23
PSY 105	Human Growth and Development	22
HIS 201	American History I	21

By discipline, the number of zero credit hour earned nonpersisters enrolled were:

ART	23	HIS	79
BIO	24	HUM	28
BUS	208	MTH	82
CHM	26	POS	27
COM	135	PSC	21
DPR	32	PSY	90
GEI	31	SOC	38

VII. Summary of Results

A. Reasons for Not Returning

1. Zero credit hour earned nonpersisters gave "Present job responsibilities too great," "Family responsibilities interfere with studies," "No clearly defined educational goal," "Classes not offered at a time convenient for my personal schedule," "Desired courses not offered," "Dissatisfaction with chosen program," "Health or other personal reasons," "Found employment" and "Inadequate study techniques or habits" as important reasons for withdrawing from MVCC.

2. Full-time and part-time nonpersister reasons for withdrawing from MVCC were identical.

3. Occupational and transfer nonpersister reasons for withdrawing from MVCC were identical.

4. Students 21 years of age or younger tended to rate "Coursework not challenging" as an important reason for withdrawing from MVCC.

5. Students 22 years of age or older tended to rate "Family responsibilities interfere with studies" as an important reason for withdrawing from MVCC.

6. Female students tended to rate "Found employment" as important reason for withdrawing from MVCC.

B. Educational Goals

1. The primary educational goal of zero credit hour earned nonpersisters was "Improvement or upgrading of skills," "Progress toward a degree or certificate" or "Personal enrichment."

C. Withdrawal from Classes

1. A majority of zero credit hour earned nonpersisters dropped from their MVCC classes by the end of mid-term week.

D. Number of Hours Employed While Attending MVCC

1. More than three of every ten zero credit hour earned nonpersisters were employed while attending MVCC.

2. One-third of the zero credit hour earned nonpersisters who were employed were working 40 or more hours a week.

3. More than six of every ten nonpersisters were working a minimum of 30 hours a week while attending MVCC.

E. Financial Aid

1. Almost two of every ten nonpersisters were receiving financial aid.

2. There were no significant differences in reasons for not returning to MVCC by those students who did and did not receive financial aid.

3. Zero credit hour earned nonpersisters did not obtain a loan in order to attend MVCC.

F. Present Educational Activity

1. Seventy-two percent of the zero credit hour earned nonpersisters are not now attending educational institutions.

2. Two of every 25 nonpersisters are attending another college.

G. Present Employment Status

1. Seven of every ten nonpersisters are now employed full-time.

H. Future Educational Plans

1. Approximately one-fourth of the nonpersisters plan to complete a certificate or a degree.

2. More than two of every ten nonpersisters plan to take courses to improve their job skills.

3. More than four of every ten nonpersisters plan to take courses for their personal enrichment.

I. Analysis of Zero Credit Hours Earned Nonpersister Enrollment Patterns

1. Eighteen percent of the zero credit hour earned nonpersisters who officially withdrew from MVCC returned. In their subsequent attempt to earn credit, they were unsuccessful.

2. Eighteen percent of the zero credit hour earned nonpersisters who earned all X's from MVCC returned. In their subsequent attempt to earn credit, they were unsuccessful.

3. Eighty-two percent of the zero credit hour earned nonpersisters were first time enrollees.

4. Twenty-five courses enrolled at least 20 zero credit hour earned nonpersisting students.

5. Business courses enrolled 208 zero credit hour earned nonpersisting students, followed by 135 students in communication courses, 90 students in psychology courses, 82 students in mathematics courses and 19 students in history courses.

VIII. Additional Comments

The following selection of unedited comments were made by spring 1976 through fall 1976 zero credit hour earned nonpersisters. These statements were chosen to demonstrate the range of comments.

- *I took COM 101--we had to read out loud in class and do high school grammar exercises. I had other English courses in college and found the outline of your 101 irrelevant and unchallenging to my abilities.*

- *While attending MVCC, I was very dissatisfied with the instructors.*

- *I have been out of school for such a long time I really don't know how to go about selecting classes, enrolling, etc.*

- *Only one instructor gave me encouragement to pursue my interests. At my age I needed all the help I could get.*

- *At that time job responsibilities were too great to be able to study and do all homework properly and to keep grade average up.*

- *One best reason was lack confidence.*

- *I'd like to take some classes, I really would. But unless I can get some of the classes I'd like to take and/or stop getting bogged down in a not very efficient school administration, I guess I never will. But thanks for letting me feel free.*

- *I would like very much to return to college if it is possible for me to re-enroll!*

MKB/st

Appendix A

MORAINE VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Former Student Survey
1976

Instructions: For each item, circle the letter which best gives your answer.

A. YOUR MVCC ACTIVITY

1. Which one of the following was your primary educational goal when you enrolled at MVCC?

   a. To complete deficiencies in order to transfer to a senior college
   b. To prepare for the GED equivalency exam
   c. To complete a MVCC certificate or associate degree program
   d. To improve or upgrade my skills
   e. To learn a new skill
   f. For personal enrichment
   g. Other (Please specify): _____

2. When did you stop attending classes?

   a. Before mid-term
   b. Mid-term week
   c. After mid-term and before end of semester
   d. After end of semester

3. If you were employed while attending MVCC, about how many hours a week did you usually work? (Leave blank if not employed.)

   a. Less than 10 hours
   b. 10-19 hours
   c. 20-29 hours
   d. 30-39 hours
   e. 40 hours or more

4. Which of the following types of financial aid were you receiving?

   a. None
   b. Scholarship
   c. Loan
   d. Work/Study
   e. GI Bill
   f. Other (Please specify): _____

B. PRESENT ACTIVITIES AND FUTURE PLANS

5. What is your present educational activity?

   a. Not presently attending school
   b. Attending MVCC adult education classes, workshops or seminars
   c. Attending another college or university
   d. Attending an art, business, technical or trade school
   e. Other (Please specify): _____

6. What is your present employment status?

   a. Working full-time (35 hours or more a week)
   b. Working part-time (less than 35 hours)
   c. Unemployed, but actively seeking a job
   d. Unemployed, not actively seeking a job

7. What are your future educational plans?

   a. To take courses for my personal enjoyment or satisfaction
   b. To take courses, as needed, to improve my job skills
   c. To complete a MVCC certificate or associate degree program
   d. To complete at least a bachelor's degree
   e. Do not plan to return to school

C. REASONS FOR NOT RETURNING

Listed below are several reasons for not re-enrolling at MVCC. Indicate the importance of each reason for your not re-enrolling at MVCC this semester. Use this key:

a = The One Best Reason
b = A Very Important Reason
c = An Important Reason
d = An Unimportant Reason

a b c d 8. Found study too difficult

a b c d 9. Change in career goal

a b c d 10. Transferred to another college

a b c d 11. Present job responsibilities too great

a b c d 12. Applied but could not obtain financial aid

a b c d 13. Lack of transportation

a b c d 14. Family responsibilities interfere with studies

a b c d 15. No clearly defined educational goal

a b c d 16. Classes not offered at a time convenient for my personal schedule

a b c d 17. Desired courses not offered

a b c d 18. Dissatisfaction with chosen program

a b c d 19. Poor college social life

a b c d 20. Health or other personal reasons

a b c d 21. Moved out of MVCC district

a b c d 22. Found employment

a b c d 23. Coursework not challenging

a b c d 24. Inadequate study techniques or habits

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.
PLEASE FEEL FREE TO MAKE ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES

JUL 28 1978

CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
JUNIOR COLLEGES